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THE
FUTURE NATIONAL BARD.

HER PETITION WAS BROUGHT BEFORE CONGRESS BY

HON. JOHN SHERMAN,

PRESIDENT OF THE U. S. SENATE.

*Her Nomination has been Made by an Overwhelming Majority of
Editors.*

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THE FUTURE NATIONAL BARD.

Sarah A. Kelley, whose *nom-de-plume* is The Bard of Shanty Hill, was born at the romantic little village of Lanesboro, in the town of Harmony, Susquehanna Co., Pa., July 18, 1842, and is the seventh child of her parents. Her father, Philip Ulrich, was an honest Pennsylvania German, who had been raised at Reading, Berks Co., Pa., while her mother's parents were Boston Yankees, who descended afar back from the French nation. Her grandfather, Levi Lovering, was a Worshipful Master of the Free Masons Lodge, and was duly honored by a Free Mason's Funeral Rite, some twenty-nine years ago, in the State of Massachusetts. Her husband was also a Free Mason. Her great-grandfather on her mother's side was Ezra Eames, who was the richest man at Boston in his time. Her other great-grandfather was a hero in the Revolutionary war.

The Bard is a natural born Poetess, and sometimes wrote her compositions in poetry, when a child. When a young lady at the high school, she was frequently chosen editor of the paper of compositions to write editorials for that paper. She was also chosen elocutionist to read the paper of compositions on Friday afternoons when the school had visitors, and was called the best elocutionist in the school at Susquehanna Depot, taught by Prof. Rogers. She was also called the best singer in the school, and led the singing. Her parents removed from Lanesboro to Susquehanna Depot when she was fourteen years old, and lived there until after the war.

At the age of eighteen years she began teaching district school, and received the best diploma of any teacher in Susquehanna county. She was also graded the best of any teacher in the county in the art of teaching.

At the age of twenty she married her husband, Horace Jackson Kelley, a very popular gentleman, (better known as California, or

Jack Kelley, because he had amassed a large fortune at the Golden Gate a short time previous). Mr. Kelley fell in love with her at first sight, at a teachers' examination, and was desirous of having their marriage take place when they had only been acquainted ten days. The lady did not marry him, however, until they had kept company about fourteen months.

Their marriage took place July 4th, 1862, Rev. Pease, a Baptist minister, officiating. Mr. Kelley's mother was a very earnest Christian lady of the close communion Baptist persuasion, and although the Bard was not at that time a member of any church, she was idolized by her mother-in-law, who always spoke of her son's wife to her neighbors as being "the nearest to an angel of any one she had ever seen on earth." May she rest in peace. Mother-in-law's funeral eulogies, by Rev. R. G. Lamb, of Gibson, Susquehanna county, Pa., were the best the writer has ever heard.

Mrs. Kelley and her venerable mother, Mrs. Mary Ann Ulrich, are members of the Episcopal Church at Honesdale, Pa. Her father was also a member of that church for some years before he died. He had Episcopal and Grand Army services combined. The eulogies were very beautiful and he had the largest funeral the writer has seen during the seven years we have lived at Honesdale. He was the oldest veteran soldier in that town, having died at the age of 83 years, three years ago the 8th of last May, from an injury received on the march to the battle of Gettysburg, and was a very great sufferer for twenty years before he died. Sergeant Kelley, the husband of the Bard, was also duly prepared for death by an Episcopal minister some four months before he died.

Mr. Kelley, the husband of the Bard, was drafted when they had only been married about ten weeks; so he went to war and was elected Second Sergeant.

He was the moneyed man of the company and gave his Captain lots and lots of money, a hundred dollars at a time, to buy provisions for all of them when they were starving on hard-tack down in Virginia. He rendered valiant service to the Government, was

wounded once in the knee, in a skirmish, and was honorably discharged with the regiment, September 5th, 1863. He belonged to Co. E, 177th Penn'a Regiment.

Sergeant Kelley contracted a derangement of mind while in the army. The Captain had to have him watched for about three weeks to keep him from committing suicide, and he was subject to insane spells all the rest of his life. For many years before he died he would have an insane fit whenever he came in presence of his wife, and made many attempts on her life while deranged in his mind. She had to hide away from him for many years before he died, to save her life, although he always idolized her when he was in his right mind, and he told people on his death bed that he had grieved himself to death because his wife had left him; but she had to leave him to save her life, because he drove her away, and would have killed her had she not gone. His physicians say he died of consumption, caused by sleeping on the ground in winter in Virginia, where they were stationed. He weighed 190 pounds when he went into the service, and was reduced to 160 that winter in the army; and he was ailing when he came home from war, with a cough, which ended in consumption, and he never recovered his flesh. He would have died of consumption from army life, even if he had not been deranged in mind, in the writers' opinion; and yet we might always have lived happily together during his life time, had it not been for that accursed disease called insanity, which he contracted while in the army, and which made more trouble than a thousand deaths would make; for there is no such trouble on earth as to be obliged to live in fear of being murdered by an insane husband. I was obliged to support myself for about eleven years or more before he died, for he would do nothing toward my support, even when he knew where I was, and came to my house to see me, and was sure to have a crazy fit and try to kill me before he left, so I kept my whereabouts unknown to him as much as I could. He died nine years ago, and I, a very feeble woman, am left with a son nearly twenty years of age, who is a sickly and dependent child,

and a very great sufferer with curvature of the spine and rheumatism. The most of doctors think he can not live long, and I am without means to bury him, and he is likely to drop off at any time.

I am now engaged selling my Poems and Photographs to raise sufficient means to keep my crippled son and myself out of the poor house for a short time, while I am so sick that I ought to lie in bed, for I have not yet received my widow's pension, and am trying to have an act passed by Congress to have it paid without the other evidence, which never can be furnished.

Sergeant Kelley was worth over fifty thousand dollars at the close of the war, and he gave away all of that entire fortune, while deranged in his mind from army life, before he died; and it is the duty of Congress to refund this money to his widow and crippled son and daughter. The latter, aged twenty-two years, is wearing out a miserable existence, working for The Scranton Corset Company, trying to support herself, while she ought to be living on the interest of what the Nation has so long owed us. The interest on what my insane husband squandered since his army life amounts to much more than the principal, and so the Government already owes us considerably more than a hundred thousand dollars at this time.

And I hereby respectfully ask that august body, now assembled at Washington, D. C., to refund my losses, or at least some of the interest on the same, sufficient to place me and my family beyond the reach of want. I ask it in the name of all that I have suffered; in the name of nine Hero friends, four having died to perpetuate this Government. And there is no greater honor than

THE HONOR OF WAR.

I.

I am thinking, I am thinking, I am thinking,
 Of the days when my heart was young and light;
 Now my Hero friends are buried, I am sinking
 Neath untimely sorrow and affliction's blight.

II.

I have buried all the nearest and the dearest,
 Who responded to the sound of bugle call;
 Brother, Father, Husband and his Brother dearest,
 Did fight the Nation's Battles and did fall.

III.

They are sleeping very sweetly in their glory,
 Very sweetly they are sleeping in the grave;
 To write the Nation's Ballads is my glory,
 For I came of a people very brave.

IV.

Let me ever sing praise to Fallen Heroes,
 Who fought the Nation's Battles in their day.
 I wept because I could not fight with Heroes
 In sixty-one, in my happy youthful day.

V.

Though it was not my lot to be a Fallen Hero,
 I was sought for National Bard to sing the rest;
 To sing the sweet memorial of the Hero,
 They say a feminine Bard is much the best.

VI.

All is well that ends well, sang immortal Shakspeare,
 I am thankful that it is not any worse,
 Though in his time they did not Pension Shakspeare,
 They will Pension me in time rather terse.

VII.

In the Evening of my life they'll have me singing
 Of my Gallant Hero Friends, who died from War.
 Sweetly in the Nation's ear my notes are ringing,
 There's no greater honor than to die from War.

I'LL SING THAT HAPPY BAND.

A happy family once did sing,
 In sixty-one, in early spring,
 In Dixie's Land I'll take my stand,
 I'll fight till I die for my Northern Land,
 And then they went to Dixie's Land
 And fought the Nation's Battles grand.

Nine Hero friends to war did go;
 For four the Nation's tears doth flow.
 One sleeps in a green grave on Gettysburg Hill,
 And all through that battle fought Brother Phil;
 Dear Father hath died from the march to that Battle,
 Where fell Brother Henry amid Canon rattle.

At Honesdale you'll find my Vet'ran Father's grave,
 My family were all a people very brave.
 I wept myself, when I saw Brothers going to drill,
 For they would not enlist The Bard of Shanty Hill;
 So during all the War this Bard at home did stay,
 While her kindred won undying fame in the army in their day.

And her Husband, Sergeant Kelly, hath done a noble deed,
 Lots of money gave his Captain, starving Comrades to feed;
 And later in the army he became deranged in mind,
 Then he gave away a very large fortune we find:
 My Crippled Son and I are left in greatest need,
 Suffering even more than slaves did before they were freed.

Yet we suffer as true Patriots, e'en now I'm loyal still,
 And thank the Nation for remembering The Bard of Shanty Hill,
 And Nominating me for The National Bard,
 Whose kindred were all Heroes and died from battles hard;
 A happy Band of Heroes have gone down to Soldiers' graves.
 I'll write the Nation's Ballads, and sing Her Heroes Brave.



OUR NATIONAL PRIDE.

A hopeful people long had fought,
 To preserve the Union dearly bought;
 By the blood of my fore-fathers in Washington's Day,
 And in our late War, all my kindred marched away.

They fought to quell Rebellion, and many of them died.
 This mem'ry will ever be our Nation's joy and pride;
 The Soldiers make the History of the Nation in their day,
 They are sleeping in their glory, Hero friends who've passed away.

Sergeant Kelley was a man who'll be remembered evermore,
 He often gave his Captain a hundred dollars or more
 To buy provisions for the Company, when starving on hard-tack;
 My Crippled Son and I are needy now, Congress ought to pay me
 back.

The Government owes me a hundred thousand dollars or more
 Husband squandered since deranged in mind on fair Potomac shore;
 I'll thank Congress very kindly, when this honest debt they pay
 The Bard of Shanty Hill, whose fame shall never fade away.

August 9th, 1886.

A POET-LAUREATE.

Think not dame fortune evermore will slight us,
 Though for a long time she did hide her face,
 A Poet-Laureate in future shall delight us,
 Sweet gems of Poetry shall the Capitol grace.

One when living amid wealth surrounding
 Assumed the pen-name of The Bard of Shanty Hill,
 Whose fame to the end of the earth is now resounding,
 Whose works the largest volume extant soon will fill.

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